City of Santa Barbara

SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCE DESIGN GUIDELINES CHECKLIST

ADDRESS: _____ MST200 _____

			YES	NO
SITE PLANNING AND STRUCTURE PLACEMENT GUIDELINES				
1.	**Environmental Setting**: *Integrate structures and site plan with the environmental setting.*			
	Are the structures and the site plan integrated with the environmental setting?		☐	☐
2.	**Neighborhood Context**: *Integrate structures and site plan with the neighborhood.*			
	Are the structures and site plan integrated with the neighborhood?		☐	☐
3.	**Solar Design**: *Design to maximize options for passive and active solar heating and cooling.*			
	Are structures designed to maximize options for passive and active solar heating and cooling?	(P)	☐	☐
4.	**Permeability**: *Maximize permeable areas.*			
4.1	Is stormwater and non-stormwater runoff from the site to the street or neighboring properties minimized?	(P)	☐	☐
4.2	Does site design maximize water permeability by reducing paved areas, using permeable paving materials and preserving open space drainage ways when feasible?	(P)	☐	☐
4.3	Are large continuous paved areas avoided?	(P)	☐	☐
4.4	Has the design considered using permeable paving materials such as ungrouted brick pavers or interlocking paving systems in which grass can be grown?	(P)	☐	☐
4.5	Has the design considered conveying stormwater from building roofs to an on-site drainage system, such as French drains, detention basins or bioswales, or into planted areas?	(P)	☐	☐

Key
(P): Check at preliminary review stage
(F): Check at final review stage

			YES	NO
4.6	Are driveway and curb-cut widths minimized?	(P)	☐	☐
4.7	Is paving in the front yard limited to the width required for access to a garage or other required parking spaces?	(P)	☐	☐
4.8	Has the design considered using a "ribbon driveway" to minimize pavement and add permeability?	(P)	☐	☐

5. Parking Aesthetics: *Minimize parking aesthetic impacts along the street.*

5.1	Has the design considered using textured/patterned driveways to complement architecture and minimize driveway visual impacts?	(P)	☐	☐
5.2	For new construction, are garages not the predominant feature of the front elevation?		☐	☐
5.3	Is there no construction over carports?		☐	☐
5.4	Is the car located behind the main residence, where feasible?		☐	☐
5.5	Are garages on the ground floor of multi-story buildings?		☐	☐
5.6	On flat lots, is underground parking avoided or located away from the street front?		☐	☐
5.7	Are existing covered parking structures used?		☐	☐

COMPATIBILITY GUIDELINES

6. Neighborhood: *Design a project to be compatible with the immediate neighborhood, and carefully consider the neighborhood study area for a project.*

	Is the project compatible with the immediate neighborhood and the neighborhood study area?	(F)	☐	☐

7. Volume, Bulk, Massing and Scale: *Design structures to be compatible with neighboring houses in terms of volume, size, massing, scale and bulk.*

	Are the structures compatible with neighboring houses in terms of volume, size, massing, scale and bulk?		☐	☐

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			YES	NO
8.	**Floor to Lot Area Ratio (FAR)**: *Strive for a project which falls in the "less than 85% of maximum FAR" range for the project lot size.*			
8.1	Is the project less than 85% of the maximum FAR for the project lot size?		☐	☐
8.2	If the project is greater than 85% of the maximum FAR for the project lot size, is the project compatible with the 20 closest homes?		☐	☐
8.3	Is the project under the maximum FAR?		☐	☐
	If the answer to 3.3 is "no," does the project meet the following findings?			
	a) Does the lot exhibit a physical condition (such as the location, surroundings, topography or the size of the lot relative to the other lots in the neighborhood) that does not generally exist on the other lots in the neighborhood?	(P)	☐	☐
	b) Does the physical condition of the lot allow the project to be compatible with existing development within the neighborhood that complies with the net floor area standard?	(P)	☐	☐
9.	**Height**: *Design structure heights to be compatible with the neighborhood.*			
9.1	Is building height in proportion to the style and size of the house and the lot area?		☐	☐
9.2	Have excessive building heights (25' in most neighborhoods) been avoided?		☐	☐
9.3	Have tall plate heights (e.g., over 10') that unnecessarily add to the volume of the structure been avoided?		☐	☐
9.4	Where appropriate to the architectural style, do architectural features indicate where a first story ends and a second story begins when the structure is viewed from the street?		☐	☐
9.5	*Basement and cellar height above grade*			
	a) Is the vertical distance from grade to the ceiling four feet (4') or less for the entire circumference of the exterior walls of a basement or cellar?		☐	☐
	b) Is the vertical distance from grade to the ceiling four feet (4') or less for at least one-half of the circumference of the exterior walls of a basement or cellar?		☐	☐

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			YES	NO
9.6	Where appropriate, are some portions of the roof lowered to the gutter or eave line of the first-story roof to reduce the apparent volume of the building?		☐	☐
10.	**Façade Articulation**: *Use façade articulation to create appropriate scale and add visual interest.*			
10.1	Where appropriate to the architectural style, are there steps or offsets extending to grade where dimensions of the dwelling would otherwise appear too long?		☐	☐
10.2	Do projected or recessed architectural details (e.g., bays and windows) and changes in building materials or color visually break up buildings or walls?	(P)	☐	☐
10.3	Where appropriate to the design, does the height of building segments vary?		☐	☐
10.4	Are all sides of the dwelling articulated in a way that is appropriate to the architectural style?		☐	☐
11.	**Architectural Style**: *Choose a style compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and use architectural features to create a consistent architectural style.*			
11.1	Do architectural features (e.g., dormers, bay windows, porches, balconies, entrance projections) enhance the architectural form and style of the house?		☐	☐
11.2	Is the architectural style (as expressed through building materials, colors, design, exterior treatment, roof articulation and overall design in construction) of good quality and durable exterior materials?		☐	☐
12.	**Openings**: *Use openings such as doors and windows in a manner compatible with the neighborhood.*			
12.1	In an addition, are doors and windows the same shape and size or compatible with the dominant door and window neighborhood patterns, including proportions, materials and detailing?	(F)	☐	☐
12.2	Does the pattern of windows and doors reflect the scale and patterns in the neighborhood?		☐	☐
12.3	Are one or more windows visible from the street on the portion of the dwelling facing the front yard?		☐	☐

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			YES	NO
13.	**Entries**: *Main entries should be visible from the street and contribute towards a friendly neighborhood experience.*			
13.1	Are there landscaped pathways to the main entry rather than only a connection to the front entry directly from a driveway?	(P)	☐	☐
13.2	Are front entries not blocked with walls, screens, fences or tall hedges?	(P)	☐	☐
13.3	Are entries designed in proportion to the scale of the dwelling?	(F)	☐	☐
13.4	In infill areas, are entrances no taller than one story?	(F)	☐	☐
14.	**Roof Design**: *Carefully plan roof forms on a home for a well-designed structure compatible with the neighborhood.*			
14.1	Is the primary roof form compatible with the existing neighborhood?		☐	☐
14.2	Is there an appropriate number of roof forms in order to reduce the dwelling's apparent mass and scale and provide visual interest?		☐	☐
14.3	Are additional roof forms architecturally compatible with the primary roof form's slope and material?		☐	☐
14.4	Is the roof suitable for an efficient and aesthetically integrated solar energy system?		☐	☐
14.5	Is mechanical equipment screened?	(F)	☐	☐
14.6 – 14.10	Are skylight guidelines 14.6 through 14.10 met (SFDB Guidelines, pg. 29c)?		☐	☐
15.	**Roof Materials**: *Roofing material and color should be consistent with the building architectural style. Eave closures, a.k.a. bird stops, if any are proposed, shall be mortared with natural cement.*			
	Is roofing material and color consistent with the building architectural style?		☐	☐
16.	**Exterior Materials and Colors**: *Exterior materials and colors should complement the style of the house and neighborhood, as well as blend with surrounding natural features when viewed from a distance.*			
16.1	Does the building color complement architectural details and blend with the surrounding neighborhood?	(F)	☐	☐

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			YES	NO
16.2	Is ornamentation applied in a way that is consistent with the style of the dwelling and avoids making the dwelling appear overly decorated?	(P/F)	☐	☐
16.3	Have reflective or metallic materials on roofs, walls and windows been avoided?	(F)	☐	☐
16.4	Are darker materials and colors used to reduce the apparent volume of the building?	(F)	☐	☐
16.5	If the project is in the Hillside Design District, are there natural earth tone colors that blend with the surrounding topography?	(F)	☐	☐
16.6	Does stucco have a smooth, undulating, troweled finish?	(F)	☐	☐
16.7	Are deck railing materials consistent with the architectural style of the structure?	(F)	☐	☐
16.8	Are paved areas broken up with colored or textured materials?	(P)	☐	☐
16.9	Are large expanses of building walls, including retaining walls, avoided?		☐	☐

17. Fences, Walls and Hedges: *Integrate fences, walls and hedges with structures and setting.*

17.1	Are fence, hedge and wall heights minimized?		☐	☐
17.2	Are horizontal lines and proportion used to reduce the perception of height and bulk?		☐	☐
17.3	Is an open rather than solid fence design used to reduce visual and structural bulk?	(F)	☐	☐
17.4	Are earth tone colors and native, natural materials used?	(F)	☐	☐
17.5	Is vegetation and landscaping integrated with fence and wall design?	(F)	☐	☐
17.6	Are chain link fences either avoided or given a dark color such as dark green or black and softened with landscaping?	(F)	☐	☐

TWO-STORY DESIGN CONCEPTS

18.	Does the building avoid crowding or overwhelming neighboring residences?		☐	☐
19.	Does the design avoid a “vertical canyon effect” between homes?		☐	☐

Key
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			YES	NO
20.	Are areas of maximum height minimized?		☐	☐
21.	Does the height of building elements vary?		☐	☐
22.	Do roof lines vary?		☐	☐
23.	Are taller portions of structures set back from the lot lines to reduce the appearance of height?		☐	☐
24.	Are architectural features used to break up unacceptable bulk?		☐	☐
25.	Is the home less than three stories tall if in an infill neighborhood?		☐	☐

HILLSIDE HOUSING DESIGN GUIDELINES

26. Natural Surroundings: *Blend the house into its natural surroundings.*

26.1	Has stepping the building up or down the hill been balanced with avoiding excessive spill down?		☐	☐
26.2	Has setting the building into the hillside been balanced with minimizing grading?		☐	☐
26.3	Have large continuous paved areas been avoided or broken up using colored or textured materials?	(P)	☐	☐
26.4	Have natural earth tone colors that blend with the surrounding topography and vegetation been used?	(F)	☐	☐
26.5	Does the project fit in with hillside topography and background?		☐	☐
26.6	Does the project avoid interrupting natural ridgelines and skylines?		☐	☐
26.7	Is landscaping used to blend the structure with the environment?	(P)	☐	☐
26.8	Are materials and colors used to reduce the apparent bulk?	(F)	☐	☐
26.9	Are exposed foundations and undersides of structures minimized?		☐	☐
26.10	Are large downhill cantilevers and tall support columns for overhanging areas avoided?		☐	☐
26.11	Does the project follow the City's High Fire Hazard Landscape Standards and follow the SFRD Guidelines, Part II: Landscaping 5.3 High Fire Hazard Landscape Design?	(P)	☐	☐

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			YES	NO
27.	**Height and Proportions**: *Building height should be in proportion to the style and size of the house and to the lot area.*			
27.1	Are higher portions of the structure set back to reduce the appearance of height?		☐	☐
27.2	Does the height of building elements vary?		☐	☐
27.3	Are areas of maximum height minimized?		☐	☐
27.4	On hillsides, are designs intended for flat lots avoided?		☐	☐
28.	**Apparent Height**: *Structures should have a modest "apparent height" (lowest point of contact with grade to highest point of building dimension).*			
28.1	Does the home have an apparent height of less than 30 feet?		☐	☐
28.2	If the slope is less than 25%, does the home have a height of less than 25 feet?		☐	☐
28.3	Do retaining walls avoid increasing a structure's apparent height?		☐	☐
28.4	Does the home have a total run of less than 60' in horizontal distance for combined steps?		☐	☐
28.5	Is the spilldown limited on moderately steep or gently sloping lots?		☐	☐
29.	**Grading**: *Limit the amount of grading to avoid erosion, visual impacts and other impacts.*			
29.1	Does the project minimize grading both underneath the main building and on the entire site?	(P)	☐	☐
29.2	Are slopes greater than 30% preserved by avoiding grading and clearing?		☐	☐
29.3	Is visual scarring avoided?		☐	☐
29.4	Are retaining walls incorporated under the house?		☐	☐
29.5	Has the visual impact of grading been minimized by doing most of the cut under the buildings?		☐	☐
29.6	Are cut and fill balanced on site, while allowing for any export needed to preserve the natural topography?		☐	☐

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			YES	NO
29.7	If excess materials are used elsewhere on the site, will the grading result in minimum changes to the natural contours and not be distinguished from surroundings within a short period of time?		☐	☐
29.8	Do man-made contours mimic natural contours?	(P)	☐	☐
29.9	Has hiding downhill foundations with fill been avoided?	(P)	☐	☐
30.	**Grading for Driveways**: *Minimize and mitigate visual effects of grading for driveway purposes.*			
30.1	Is the house set on the site so that the length of the driveway is minimized?		☐	☐
30.2	Has the visibility of driveway cuts been minimized?	(P)	☐	☐
30.3	Have planting, wall materials and colors been used to minimize visual effects of driveway cuts?	(F)	☐	☐
30.4	Are driveways designed to slope with the natural topography?		☐	☐
31.	**Architectural Features**: *Use architectural features that are consistent with the chosen style to break up unacceptable massing.*			
31.1	Do rooflines vary?		☐	☐
31.2	Is a combination of vertical and horizontal elements used?		☐	☐
31.3	Are doors and windows used to create patterns?		☐	☐
31.4	Are stepbacks and projections used in the design to create interest?		☐	☐
31.5	Are tall elements placed toward the center of the uphill portion of the building?		☐	☐
32.	**Neighborhood Compatibility**: *Design structure to fit with the existing neighborhood.*			
32.1	Is the project compatible with neighboring houses in terms of proportion, size, bulk, height and setbacks?		☐	☐
32.2	Does the project meet the Compatibility Guidelines in the Single Family Residence Design Guidelines?	(F)	☐	☐
32.3	Does the project avoid crowding or overwhelming neighboring residences?		☐	☐

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			YES	NO
32.4	Does the project meet the Good Neighbor Guidelines of the Single Family Residence Design Guidelines?	(F)	☐	☐
32.5	Is a vertical canyon effect between houses minimized?		☐	☐
33.	**Decks and Courtyards**: *Locate decks and courtyards in areas compatible with the neighborhood.*			
33.1	Does deck and courtyard placement consider topography and neighbors' privacy and noise levels?		☐	☐
33.2	Are outdoor fireplaces and chimneys placed in a location that will not impact neighbors' views, privacy, noise or air quality?		☐	☐
34.	**Retaining Walls**: *Design retaining walls to blend into their surroundings.*			
34.1	Are solid fences, landscape walls and retaining walls on hillsides minimized and kept under 50' long?		☐	☐
34.2	Are fence and wall heights minimized, kept under 6' if stucco, and kept under 8' if the materials are aesthetically pleasing such as stone?	(F)	☐	☐
34.3	Are long, continuous walls broken up by buttresses or pilasters and made of appropriate natural materials such as stone or adobe?	(F)	☐	☐
34.4	Are horizontal lines and proportions used to reduce the perception of height and bulk?		☐	☐
34.5	Does fence and wall design follow topography?		☐	☐
34.6	Are earth tone colors used to blend with the surrounding natural colors of the hillsides and minimize visual effects?	(F)	☐	☐
34.7	Is stone or other native, natural materials used?	(F)	☐	☐
34.8	Are vegetation and landscaping integrated with fence and wall design?	(F)	☐	☐
34.9	Are retaining walls located away from existing walls?		☐	☐
34.10	Do retaining walls not have fill behind them?		☐	☐
34.11	Are stepped or terraced retaining walls, with planting in between, acceptably used as an alternative to tall retaining walls?		☐	☐

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		YES	NO
34.12	Is the minimum distance between two terraced retaining walls at least the average height of the two walls?	☐	☐
34.13	For fill slope retaining wall systems, is the height of exposed retaining wall faces limited to 6 feet for an individual retaining wall and 12 feet for combined retaining wall faces?	☐	☐
34.14	For cut slope retaining wall systems, is the height of exposed retaining wall faces limited to 8 feet for an individual retaining wall and 16 feet for combined retaining wall faces?	☐	☐

GOOD NEIGHBOR GUIDELINES

35. Privacy Guidelines: *Locate and design structures, additions and architectural elements to create and protect privacy.*

35.1 Visual Distance

	Are structures and additions located as to increase visual distance between buildings?	☐	☐

35.2 Upper-Story Decks and Balconies

35.2.1	Has the applicant met with neighbors adjacent to proposed upper-story balconies and decks?	☐	☐
35.2.2	Are second-story balconies and decks screened from neighboring property using screening elements such as enclosing walls, trellises or awnings?	☐	☐
35.2.3	Are second-story balconies and decks located to avoid direct sight lines to neighbors' windows, open yard, patio, deck and/or loggia areas?	☐	☐
35.2.4	Are upper-story balconies and decks over 20 square feet set back at least 15' from interior lot lines when possible?	☐	☐
35.2.5	Are there no "free-standing" chimneys on upper-story decks or balconies?	☐	☐
35.2.6	In hillside areas, has the topography been considered when placing decks or outdoor courtyards?	☐	☐

35.3 Upper-Story Windows

35.3.1	Are windows placed so as to avoid direct views into neighboring windows?	☐	☐

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			YES	NO
35.3.2	Have large upper-story windows overlooking adjacent rear yards been avoided?		☐	☐
35.3.3	Are translucent window glass or high windows used to allow illumination while protecting privacy?	(F)	☐	☐
35.3.4	Are upper floors set back or side and rear setbacks increased to pull windows farther away from neighboring residences?		☐	☐
36.	**Landscaping Guidelines**: *Use landscaping to create and protect privacy.*			
36.1	Have screening plants such as hedges been considered to create privacy between neighbors?	(P)	☐	☐
36.2	Has vegetation that gives privacy to the project or its neighbors been kept?	(P)	☐	☐
36.3	Is landscaping used to screen living areas?	(P)	☐	☐
36.4	Are evergreen trees and shrubs used to provide year-round privacy?	(P)	☐	☐
36.5	Has a landscape plan been provided when window placement creates direct views between neighbors in order to provide additional screening?	(P)	☐	☐
36.6	Is landscaping consistent with the SFDB Guidelines, Part II?	(P)	☐	☐
37.	**Noise Guidelines**: *Minimize impacts of noise sources.*			
37.1	Are active outdoor areas oriented away from neighbors?		☐	☐
37.2	Are noise sources placed away from the sides of small lots and away from neighboring windows of frequently used rooms?	(F)	☐	☐
37.3	Have walls that act as noise buffers been retained or added?		☐	☐
37.4	Have the noise impacts of equipment that runs on a regular basis and that must be attached to a structure been minimized?	(F)	☐	☐
38.	**Lighting Guidelines**: *Provide sufficient light for site security and to complement the home design while not imposing on surrounding neighbors.*			
38.1	Has all exterior lighting been designed, located and lamped in order to prevent or minimize overlighting, energy waste, glare, light trespass and skyglow?	(F)	☐	☐
38.2	Is lighting installed only where needed?	(F)	☐	☐

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			YES	NO
38.3	Are light sources kept at ground level?	(F)	☐	☐
38.4	Are light sources placed such that they will not be visible from a distance?	(F)	☐	☐
38.5	Where possible, are driveways designed such that headlights will not shine onto neighboring properties?		☐	☐
38.6	Is walkway lighting located to avoid hazards and placed at a low level (e.g., bollards or fixtures mounted on short posts)?	(F)	☐	☐
38.7	Is light screening used to avoid illuminating a greater area than intended?	(F)	☐	☐
38.8	Is landscape lighting in the form of "up-lighting" trees avoided or done with narrow angle focused fixtures with low wattage lighting?	(F)	☐	☐

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